

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 IO-11 ACDA-05 OMB-01 /078 W

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R 211814Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5850

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01112

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR WB GW UR

SUBJECT: BERLIN ISSUE MARS VISIT OF SOVIET
PARLIAMENTARIANS

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE FIRST FRG/USSR PARLIAMENTARIANS' SYMPOSIUM HAS BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY SUBSTANTIAL FRG PRESS COVERAGE CONCERNING SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN'S FAILURE TO INVITE BERLIN BUNDESTAG REPS TO HIS RECEPTION FOR THE VISITING SOVIET DELEGATION. AS RESULT OF NON-INVITATION THE JANUARY 20 RECEPTION WAS BOYCOTTED BY BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT RENGEL AND THE CDU/CSU. THERE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ELEMENTS OF MISUNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGE PROGRAM DID NOT BEGIN AS SMOOTHLY AS HOPED. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF CONFLICTING REPORTS, BERLIN REPS TO THE BUNDESTAG IN THE END DID NOT RECEIVE INVITATIONS TO THE RECEPTION WHICH FALIN GAVE ON JANUARY 20 IN CONNECTION WITH THE VISIT TO BONN OF MEMBERS OF
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THE SUPREME SOVIET FOR THE FIRST FRG-USSR

PARLIAMENTARIANS' SYMPOSIUM. UNTIL VIRTUALLY THE LAST MOMENT, OFFICIAL GERMANS WERE UNCERTAIN WHETHER BERLINERS WOULD BE INVITED. WHEN IT APPEARED ON JANUARY 19 THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE, BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT RENGER AND MEMBERS OF THE CDU/CSU WHO HAD BEEN INVITED LET IT BE KNOWN THEY COULD NOT ATTEND "BECAUSE OF SCHEDULE CONFLICTS."

2. FRG FONOFF EAST-WEST AFFAIRS CHIEF MEYER-LANDRUT INDICATED TO POLITICAL COUNSELOR AT LUNCH ON JANUARY 20 THAT GERMAN POSITION HAD PRODUCED DESIRED EFFECT SINCE SOVIETS HAD SUGGESTED TO FRAU RENGERTHAT INVITATIONS TO BERLINERS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. THEY DID NOT, HOWEVER, MATERIALIZE AND RENGER AND CDU/CSU DEPUTIES BOYCOTTED THE RECEPTION. RENGER SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING SHE HAD NOT ATTENDED BECAUSE THE BERLINERS HAD NOT BEEN INVITED, ADDING THAT THE MATTER HAD SOUNDED A BAD NOTE IN AN OTHERWISE SUCCESSFUL PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGE.

3. IN JANUARY 20 AFTERNOON BONN GROUP MEETING, FRG REP (VON ARNIM) SAID THAT, WHEREAS THE PRESS HAD FOCUSED ON THE INVITATIONS ISSUE, WHICH SO FAR AS FONOFF KNEW WAS STILL UP IN AIR, ANOTHER ASPECT OF BERLIN PARTICIPATION IN THE SYMPOSIUM HAD BEEN NEGLECTED: NAMELY, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SYMPOSIUM ITSELF DISCUSSIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN BERLIN REPS AND SOVIET PARLIAMENTARIANS. IN PARTICULAR, BERLIN REPS MATTICK AND AMREHN HAD PARTICIPATED FULLY IN THESE DISCUSSIONS. MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION, LED BY SHITIKOV, REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT ON BERLIN STATING THAT THE SOVIET POSITION WAS WELL-KNOWN. VON ARNIM NOTED THAT FRG FONOFF MINISTER OF STATE WISCHNEWSKI'S KEY-NOTE SPEECH TO THE SYMPOSIUM HAD STRESSED THAT BERLIN WAS AN IMPORTANT PART OF DETENTE.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, FRG PRESIDENT SCHEEL RECEIVED THE SOVIET VISITORS ON JANUARY 20, AS LONG SCHEDULED, AND TOLD THEM IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT A BERLIN PROBLEM HAD DEVELOPED AND HAD LED TO PUBLIC CONFIDENTIAL

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DISCUSSION. SCHEEL SAID THE POSITION OF BERLIN DEPUTIES WAS REGULATED IN A "LEGALLY PRECISE" MANNER AND WAS FULLY IN ACCORD WITH THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.

5. IN CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBOFF ON JANUARY 21, SOVIET EMBASSY COUNSELOR POPOV PORTRAYED MATTER AS MINOR ISSUE WHICH PRESS HAD BLOWN UP OUT OF ALL PROPORTIONS. SOVIET

EMBASSY, HE SAID, DID NOT HAVE "OFFICIAL"
CONTACTS WITH BERLIN DEPUTIES AND NEVER INVITED THEM TO
OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS. ASKED HOW THIS SQUARED WITH
WILLINGNESS OF SOVIET DELEGATION TO MEET WITH BERLINERS
IN THE SYMPOSIUM, POPOV SAID THERE WERE SIX MEMBERS ON
EACH SIDE IN THE OFFICIAL DELEGATIONS TO THE SYMPOSIUM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01112

AND THAT THE FRG DELEGATION DID NOT INCLUDE ANY
BERLINERS. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN BERLINERS IN THE ROOM,
BUT THIS HE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT. IN ANY CASE, ACCORDING
TO POPOV THE SOVIETS WERE MERELY ADHERING TO THEIR
LONG-STANDING PRACTICE WITH REGARD TO THE RECEPTION.
HE WAS UNABLE TO COMMENT ON PRESS REPORTS THAT AMBASSADOR
FALIN HAD ASSURED FRAU RENGGER THAT BERLINERS WOULD BE
INVITED.

6. COMMENT: THIS EPISODE, REMINISCENT OF THE RECENT

FUROR OVER LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION OF A VISIT TO WEST
BERLIN BY A DELEGATION OF SOVIET MAYORS, APPARENTLY
HAS ELEMENTS OF MISUNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES. IT
SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD NOT ANTICIPATED THE
DIFFICULTIES LIKELY TO ARISE FROM FOLLOWING WHAT POPOV
DESCRIBES AS AN ESTABLISHED PRACTICE OF NOT INVITING
BERLINERS, WHEREAS THE GERMANS MAY NOT HAVE REALIZED
UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE THAT BERLINERS WERE
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TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE RECPTION. OBVIOUSLY THE
INCIDENT MEANS THAT THE PLANNED SERIES OF BILATERAL
PARLIAMENTARIANS' SYMPOSIA GOT OFF TO SOMETHING LESS
THAN A SMOOTH START. MOREOVER, THE WIDESPREAD REPORTS
ABOUT SOVIET DUPLICITY IN HANDLING THE INVITATIONS TO
BERLINERS WILL GENERATE AN ADDED ELEMENT OF FRICTION
IN GERMAN-SOVIET RELATIONS.
HILLENBRAND

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